

Message Text

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FOR AMBASSADOR BOLEN

VIENNA FOR RPO

EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: SCUL, GE US
SUBJECT: "REFLECTIONS USA" EXHIBIT

REFS: (A) USICA 20255, (B) BERLIN 5697, (C) BERLIN 4750

1. PAO MET SEPTEMBER 11 WITH DR. GERHARD MERTINK, SECRETARY OF GDR KULTURBUND, TO DISCUSS DETAILS OF PROPOSED ICA EXHIBIT "REFLECTIONS USA" WHICH MFA HAS AGREED TO IN PRINCIPLE BUT WITHOUT SPECIFYING TIME AND SITE. (FYI--AS AGENCY AWARE FROM OUR 1979 CPP, WE HAVE FROM OUTSET IDENTIFIED BERLIN TV TOWER EXHIBIT HALL AS MOST PREFERABLE SITE. IN MOST RECENT DISCUSSION WITH MFA CULTURAL DEPARTMENT (REFTEL B), OFFICIALS COULD NOT PROVIDE ANSWER TO QUESTION OF TIMING BUT APPROVED DIRECT NEGOTIATION WITH MERTINK. AGENCY WILL RECALL THAT MERTINK WAS CHIEF NEGOTIATOR FOR STRAND EXHIBIT, AND PROVED TO BE REASONABLE AND AGREEABLE. END FYI)

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TIATOR FOR STRAND EXHIBIT, AND PROVED TO BE REASONABLE AND AGREEABLE. END FYI)

2. MERTINK REFERRED TO CONVERSATION AT JULY 4 RECEPTION (REFTEL C) WHEREIN HE FIRST ALLUDED TO DIFFICULTIES IN MOUNTING "REFLECTIONS" IN 1979 BECAUSE OF HEAVY BOOKINGS OF TV TOWER.

ANTICIPATING MEETING WITH PAO, MERTINK SAID HE HAD MADE DETAILED INQUIRY INTO AVAILABILITY OF TOWER EXHIBIT HALL AND RECEIVED FINAL CONFIRMATION THAT BECAUSE OF CELEBRATIONS OF 30TH ANNIVERSARY FOUNDING OF GDR, TOWER OUT OF QUESTION THROUGH DECEMBER 1979. TWO OTHER MAJOR PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITS HE CITED WERE FREE GERMAN YOUTH EXHIBIT TO COINCIDE WITH YOUTH FESTIVAL IN MAY 1979, AND THE QUADRENNIAL BERLIN PHOTO EXHIBIT FOR OCTOBER. IN BETWEEN, MERTINK SAID, WERE EIGHT OTHER EVENTS WHICH FILLED THE REST OF THE YEAR.

3. MERTINK THEN MADE TWO PROPOSALS. FIRST, IF EMBASSY INSISTED ON 1979 FOR "REFLECTIONS," HE WOULD SUGGEST LEIPZIG OR DRESDEN, BUT IN FORE KNOWLEDGE THAT BOTH CITIES WERE HEAVILY OBLIGATED TO CELEBRATION OF GDR ANNIVERSARY. HE DID NOT, HOWEVER, CATEGORICALLY RULE THEM OUT AS HE HAD BERLIN. SECOND, IF EMBASSY COULD WAIT UNTIL 1980, HE WOULD GUARANTEE BERLIN TV TOWER FOR FIRST QUARTER OF YEAR, AND IF AGREEMENT ON THIS TIME-FRAME IS REACHED, WOULD PROVIDE SPECIFIC DATES WITHIN NEXT THREE WEEKS. PAO SAID IF THIS SO, WE WISHED "REFLECTIONS" TO BE ON DISPLAY FOR ONE FULL MONTH. MERTINK AGREED, COMMENTING THAT WHILE LEIPZIG AND DRESDEN WERE FAR FROM POOR SECOND CHOICES, BERLIN WAS THE HUB OF ALL ACTIVITY AND THE TV TOWER SPACE THE MOST IDEALLY SUITED FOR "REFLECTIONS," WITH WHICH HE IS FAMILIAR FROM LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE BROCHURES OF ITS BUCHAREST INCARNATION GIVEN THE MFA-KULTURBUND EARLY LAST YEAR.

4. PAO REPLIED THAT MATTER HAD TO BE DISCUSSED WITH AMBASSADOR WHO CURRENTLY IN USA BUT THAT PERHAPS BY END OF WEEK, DECISION COULD BE MADE. MERTINK SAID HE WOULD MOVE AS SOON AS DECISION CONVEYED.

5. COMMENT: IF AMBASSADOR BOLEN AVAILABLE FOR CONSULTATION, EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE KNOWING HIS AND ICA'S VIEWS IN HOPE OF REACHING EARLY DECISION. APPARENTLY, MERTINK CAN DELIVER TV TOWER FIRST QUARTER 1980, WHICH IS MOST DESIRABLE SITE. QUESTION IS WHETHER WE WOULD WANT TO WAIT SO LONG AND CONSEQUENTLY HAVE NO GDR-SPONSORED US EXHIBIT AT ALL IN 1979. WE AGREE WITH KULTURBUND THAT LEIPZIG AND DRESDEN ARE ALSO DESIRABLE, BUT NOTE THAT MERTINK CANNOT GUARANTEE EITHER CITY FOR 1979. IF 1980 ONLY EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL THREE SITES, WE WOULD PREFER BERLIN. TAKING INTO ACCOUNT ICA BUDGETARY CONSIDERATIONS AS WELL AS AVAILABILITY "REFLECTIONS," AND IN COORDINATION WITH AMBASSADOR BOLEN, EMBASSY REQUESTS REPLY TO FOLLOWING: (A) SHALL WE AGREE TO

BERLIN IN FIRST QUARTER 1980; OR (B) SHALL WE TRY FOR
LEIPZIG AND DRESEEN IN 1979. ONLY RISK WE RUN IN OPTION B
IS THAT REPLY WILL BE DELAYED AND BERLIN AVAILABILITY
POSSIBLY MOVED FURTHER INTO 1980. PLEASE ADVISE ASAP.
POLANSKY

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